

bush 1925; Munro 1949; Johnsgard 1975; Bellrose 1980). American Wigeons are less prone to nest in small, shallow-water marshes than other dabblers (Phillips 1923; Palmer 1976). Egg-laying dates range from mid May to mid June; a typical clutch consists of 8 to 10 eggs, which are incubated for 23 to 25 days (Munro 1949; Bellrose 1980). Nests are generally located on dry ground.

While feeding, American Wigeons are often found in the company of diving ducks and coots, from whom they pirate succulent

aquatic plant stems and foliage. Rather than steal from these birds, wigeons may simply scavenge the plants they have dislodged as the plants float to the water's surface.

CHRISTOPHER FICHEL

No. of priority blocks in which recorded

TOTAL 0 (0%)

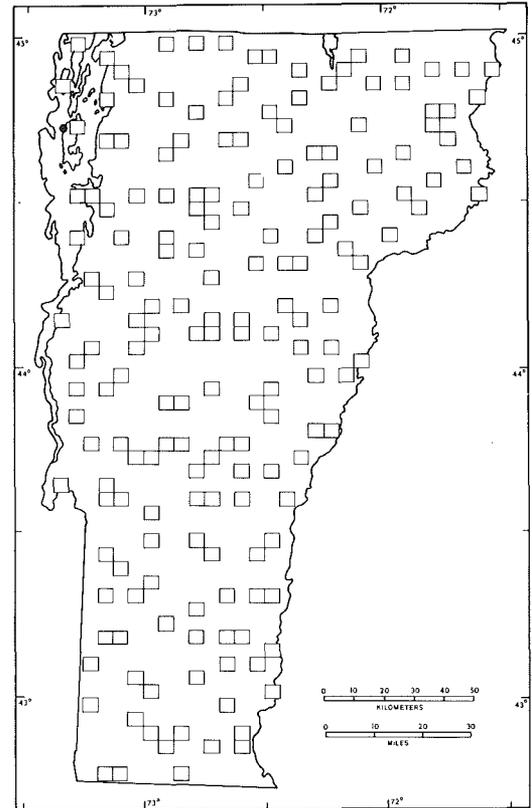
Possible breeding: 0 (0% of total)

Probable breeding: 0 (0% of total)

Confirmed breeding: 0 (0% of total)

Physiographic regions in which recorded

	no. of priority blocks	% of region's priority blocks	% of species' total priority blocks
Champlain Lowlands	0	0	0
Green Mountains	0	0	0
North Central	0	0	0
Northeast Highlands	0	0	0
East Central	0	0	0
Taconic Mountains	0	0	0
Eastern Foothills	0	0	0



Ring-necked Duck

Aythya collaris

Since the early 1930s, the number of breeding Ring-necked Ducks has been increasing in the Northeast. This increase has not followed the unidirectional, incremental pattern exhibited by other species at the edge of their range; instead, these ducks have been recorded breeding at scattered locations (Mendall 1958). The greatest number of Ring-necked Ducks occurs in the closed boreal forest zones of north central and northwestern Canada (Bellrose 1980).

Historical records for the Ring-neck's

presence in Vermont suggest that it has been a widely scattered breeder in the state since the late 1940s. The possibility of nesting pairs was first documented in 1949—a pair on Stiles Pond in Waterford on May 5, and a pair on South Bay, Lake Memphremagog on June 24 (Smith 1950a). Additional records from Coventry, presumably at South Bay or in the marshes of the Barton River, include two females with six young, July 25, 1965; a pair, May 28, 1966; and a pair with one duckling, August 28, 1966 (Eldred 1965;

Eldred 1966). Elsewhere in Vermont, a pair was observed on May 15, 1960 at Shaftsbury in the Valley of Vermont (Kosche 1960); and a pair without young was seen at Dead Creek on June 28, 1964 (Eldred 1964). A hen with four young was discovered at the north end of Gale Meadows Pond in early July 1969 (W. J. Norse, pers. comm.). This boglike area is characterized by numerous small, hummocky islands of leatherleaf and tamarack, and snags. A female incubating nine eggs at Fairfield Swamp Wildlife Management Area was discovered on June 11, 1969 (T. R. Myers, pers. comm.).

During the Atlas Project period one probable nesting occurrence was recorded. In suitable habitat at Moose Bog, Ferdinand, a pair was seen on May 10, 1980 (ASR, W. G. Ellison). Four days later a drake was observed there, acting nervously (ASR, G. F. Oatman). This is a sedge-heath bog containing a large pond, and is similar to habitats reported elsewhere as preferred by Ring-necks. Bull (1974) mentioned boggy ponds with leatherleaf and other ericaceous plants as typical breeding habitat. Mendall (1958) found sedge meadows, bogs, and abandoned beaver flowages to be favored nesting areas among Ring-necks.

Ring-necks may be easily observed during migration periods in Vermont, particularly

in the extensive marshes of Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge manager reported that counts from late September to early October 1982 recorded 8,500 Ring-necks, making this species second in abundance only to the Mallard (T. Mountain, pers. comm.). The Ring-neck reaches its greatest fall migration populations and stays in the Champlain Lowlands longest when the water levels are high and marshes flooded (T. R. Myers, pers. comm.). During spring, Ring-necks are present from mid March to mid May, with peak numbers around the third week of April.

In Vermont, the Ring-neck is currently benefiting from the high-quality marshes of the Lake Champlain basin for resting and feeding during fall migration. Documented as nesting only four times in Vermont, the Ring-neck is probably a sporadic breeder in the state.

CHRISTOPHER FICHTEL

No. of priority blocks in which recorded

TOTAL 1 (0.6%)

Possible breeding: 0 (0% of total)
 Probable breeding: 1 (100% of total)
 Confirmed breeding: 0 (0% of total)

Physiographic regions in which recorded

	no. of priority blocks	% of region's priority blocks	% of species' total priority blocks
Champlain Lowlands	0	0	0
Green Mountains	0	0	0
North Central	0	0	0
Northeast Highlands	1	6	100
East Central	0	0	0
Taconic Mountains	0	0	0
Eastern Foothills	0	0	0

